

## Let the People Speak = Let the Town Get Sued

Some residents of Templeton are outraged that they were not allowed to speak at the Board of Selectmen meetings that were held on September 26, 2011 and October 11, 2011. As Chairman of the Board of Selectmen, it was my decision to limit discussion at those meetings to the Board of Selectmen and the former town coordinator. According to the Attorney General's Open Meeting Law guide:

“While the public is permitted to attend an open meeting, an individual may not address the public body without permission of the chair. An individual is not permitted to disrupt a meeting of a public body, and at the request of the chair, all members of the public shall be silent...”

These are the reasons why I chose to run those meetings (9/26 + 10/11) in that manner. I was informed by our labor counsel that these meetings would most likely be held in open session. It was relayed to me through our labor counsel “to be prepared for a circus. This statement is attributed to Attorney Rahavy, the attorney representing the former town coordinator.

The first scheduled meeting date for the situation regarding the town coordinator was in June 2011. Attorney Rahavy, the Skeltons' attorney, was granted numerous extensions and dates to reschedule these meetings. In June of 2011, Kopelman and Paige was town

counsel. When the Board of Selectmen voted to change legal counsel from Kopelman & Paige to Blatman, Bobrowski & Mead, the Board of Selectmen also voted to appoint Kopelman & Paige as labor counsel. Kopelman & Paige notified the BOS that they were not interested in the appointment to be labor counsel three days before another meeting (August 1, 2011) had been scheduled to discuss the situation regarding the town coordinator; hence the delay in scheduling these meetings.

The BOS is aware that the former town coordinator has sued the Town of Templeton in the past. That **lawsuit** is Skelton v. Templeton WSC # 95-0089; that **lawsuit** is a public record and is available at Worcester Superior Court. There were 26 separate filings in that **lawsuit**. Carol Skelton filed the first complaint and civil action in that **lawsuit** on January 12, 1995. The last filing for that **lawsuit** took place on October 20, 2000 - "Stipulation of dismissal with prejudice." I have an electronic copy of most of the filings in that **lawsuit**, if anyone is interested.

As most people know, or should know, **ANYTHING** that was said at the meetings on September 26, 2011 and October 11, 2011 could be used against the Town of Templeton in a court of law- **IN A LAWSUIT**. I limited public discussion at these meetings **IN ORDER TO PROTECT THE TOWN OF TEMPLETON**.

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